9: Stadling--86-87 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut-1-2
116, 237, 433

"I have already spoken of the abundance of fish. The quantity of fur obtained, on the other hand, has grown smaller and smaller, the valuable sable having diminished greatly or entirely disappeared over wide regions, probably not only on account of the war of extermination carried on against it, but also because of the great forest fires, which annually lay waste hundreds of square miles. One of the natural resources of Yakutsk, which has been worked for ages, belongs to the extinct animal kingdom--namely, the valuable mammoth tusks. Middendorff calculated in the forties that, during the period of two hundred years previous to that time, the tusks of at least twenty thousand mammoths had been obtained in northern Siberia. At the present day, within the province of Yakutsk alone, about 17 tons of mammoth tusks are annually collected.

This does not, however, represent the total of the finds, [87] for numbers of them being decayed or cracked are left behind as valueless. It is only for a short time in the first part of the summer, when the spring floods have washed out the frozen earth in which the remains of this animal are buried, that the mammoth tusks can be gathered. Then the natives roam about far and wide searching the river-valleys and ravines where the floods have left fresh surfaces exposed, and gather in their crop. In consequence of the perennially frozen condition of the soil the floods wash out the earth more in a horizontal than a perpendicular direction, and from this cause these annual wash-outs often extend over a large area. The mammoth crop, then, may in a certain sense be said

to depend on the amount of rain and the weather in general during the spring. On the New Siberian Islands, on the other hand, it is the ice and the sea which make the tusks accessible to the collectors, by undermining and eroding the beach or cliffs; while sometimes, especially after heavy weather, they are thrown up on shore by the waves. The natives in the service of the merchants usually start over the frozen sea with their dogs and sledges for the islands in March, staying there all the summer and returning with their sledges loaded with ivory in the autumn, when the sea is again frozen. The mammoth crop on the islands is very greatly dependent on the winds. If, for example, protracted westerly weather prevails, the water rises very high, while during easterly storms it sinks, making a larger surface of cliff and beach accessible to the collector."

11: Lansdell--301 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 237, 352, 415

"The houses are not overstocked with furniture, and the chief cooking utensil is a large iron pot. At the time of the invasion of the Russians, this article was deemed such a treasure that the price asked for a pot was as many sable-skins as would fill it. They use also in winter a bowl-shaped frame of wicker-work, plastered with frozen cow-dung, in which they pound their porridge."

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 165- 166 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 237, 439, 532

"They carve figures of human beings which they fashion out of mammoth-tusks: but these are rigid and lifeless, with only an outward resemblance to what they represent, and much inferior to those of the Koryaks. Even these [166] specimens of their plastic art are rare and merely made for commercial purposes, to sell to the Russians. They take no pleasure in them themselves."

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 166-167 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 237, 372, 415

"Their winter dwellings are yurtas made of logs: the doors are made of raw hides, the walls of logs or wicker, caulked with cow-dung and flanked with banks of earth to the height of the windows. In place of glass they have in the windows either skins or sheets of ice which are kept in place by slanting poles, and frozen afresh into their positions at intervals by pouring water round the edges. The roofs are flat and covered with earth. The door faces east, and is protected by projecting boards. Inside the yurta is divided into two 'apartments': one is for the cattle, the other divided into sections for the family. In the middle is a round chimney made of wood, but guarded against risk of fire by a thick covering of clay. In this chimney are placed cross-beams, from which they hang their kettles and pots. Their chief cooking utensil is a large iron pot; this was so [167] valuable when the Russians invaded their teritory that the price demanded for it was as many sable-skins as would fill it. In the summer they live in conical tents of birch-bark; the poles of which these are made are about 20 ft. long, united at the top; these are covered with pieces of flexible birch- bark, 'handsomely worked along the edge with horsehair thread.'"

17: Erman--263 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 237, 342

"We arrived about seven in the morning at Beresovoi Ostrov, or Birch Island, fifty-six versts from Nokhtuisk. The place so called contains a single very comfortable farmhouse, built by an old exile from the government of Nijegorod.... In the construction of the house and stable the example of the Yakuts was here followed, for the wooden walls were plastered on the outside with cow-dung."

43: Karutz--74 [5] E-2 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 237, 805

It is interesting to note that they use a calendar of mammoth bones, a development of the tally.

Y /129 cont./

122 In another respect too the region was livelier. Countless
123 flocks of geese and gagáren (Colymbus) were startled by us.
136 The former flew up by the hundreds amid a frightful shrieking and
291 beating of wings, while the loud voices of the latter, almost
● 237 reminiscent of children's cries, resounded continuously through
the quiet region. The gagáren, of which there are three species
on the Tunguska, but we saw only two of them on the Olenék,
taste oily, but are nevertheless eaten by the natives. Caps are
sometimes made out of the pretty violet velvet-like down of
the neck; indeed, in Turuchansk /Turukhansk/ I even succeeded
in buying an overcoat, besides a cap, to be sure for the rela-
tively very high price of 50 rubles, which /130/ were shown
great approval everywhere because of their peculiar beauty.
Very light and also keeping off the rain very well, this feather
coat warmed one excellently, so that I can strongly recom-
mend it, especially for ladies. In Europe where the gagáren also
occur, it is said to come on the market occasionally, espe-
cially worked into muffs.

Y
122 Beside geese and gágáren, gulls were also common, but
136 only one species, with white neck and head, whereas on the
Tunguska we had found several species. We more rarely saw
swans, ducks, and cranes, and one bird not present along the
Tunguska, called gäscha here, from afar very similar to our
common stork, white with black wing tips -- probably it is a
T kind of crane, Grus leucogeranus, of which the cry is also
[825] reminiscent. Smaller birds appeared in noisy flocks, perhaps
already proceeding on the homeward journey, and an owl was
killed, which, it seems, is rare here, since we had seen only
two specimens from the Tunguska on, while there is certainly
no lack of other gangs of robbers on the rocks, in particular a
Y kind of falcon called térne by the Tungus.

122 Upon closer acquaintance our guide Boldonó thawed out
123 somewhat and related a little about the region, but obviously
not all that he knew by far and, as we learned later, much
that was false, deliberately however. Otherwise he was
obliging and in particular supplied us daily with fresh fish,
which, along with geese, which were now also frequently caught,